

Washington, DC -- Today, U.S Representative Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica) called on the federal Social Security Administration (SSA) to protect Cayuga County's 19,745 social security beneficiaries and keep the SSA office located in Auburn open.

"People who have worked their whole lives and paid into Social Security deserve a local office where they can go with questions or complications and receive face-to-face service," Arcuri said. "Asking older residents, many of them without their own means of transportation and with limited mobility, to drive to Geneva or Syracuse to get personal help regarding their very livelihood is not a reasonable solution. The Auburn Social Security Office is a critical community resource that serves some of our most vulnerable citizens and should remain open."

Immediately after hearing that the Auburn office was being considered for closure by the Social Security Administration, Arcuri sent a letter to SSA Commissioner Michael J. Astrue stating his strong opposition to closing the office. Arcuri noted that asking senior citizens, many of them disabled or economically disadvantaged, to rely on public transportation or the help of friends and relatives was a serious concern.

Arcuri received a letter back from Commissioner Astrue affirming the Social Security Administration's intent to close the Auburn office. Astrue noted changing demographics and budget constraint as reasons behind the proposed closure. Astrue advised residents to call or go online to get immediate service if they were unable to travel to Syracuse or Geneva.

"Cayuga County seniors shouldn't have to rely on the internet to get help with their checks," Arcuri said. "My district has the largest number of individuals receiving Social Security benefits out of our entire state. I find it hard to believe 'changing demographics' in Upstate New York have done anything other than expand the need for services for our increasingly aging population —especially as Baby Boomers move into the Social Security system."

Of the approximately 81,000 people living in Cayuga County, 19,745 are Social Security beneficiaries who receive services through the Auburn office.

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